

REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-8, 10-32 and 34-42. Claims 2, 3, 10, 11, 19, 20, 26, 27, 34 and 35 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 4, 5, 12, 18, 21, 25, 28, 29 and 36 are hereby amended. Claims 1, 4-8, 12-18, 21-25, 28-32 and 36-42 remain in the application for consideration. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks Examiner Pesin for the courtesy of a personal interview with Applicant's representative, Sanford T. Colb (Reg. No. 26,856), held in the USPTO on March 8, 2006. At the interview, Mr. Colb explained the patentability of the claims over the cited art and suggested possible amendments that might put the claims in condition for allowance. Agreement was not reached, however.

In subsequent e-mail correspondence with Applicant's representative, Daniel Kligler (Reg. No. 41,120), the Examiner suggested that if the independent claims were amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 2, 3, 10 and 11, the claims would probably be allowed following a further search. No Request for Continued Examination would be required for entry of the amendment. Applicant has amended the claims accordingly.

Claims 1, 6, 7, 9, 18, 22, 25, 30, 31 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Browning (U.S. Patent 6,081,629) in view of Bull (U.S. Patent 6,735,574) and further in view of Lorie (U.S. Patent 5,933,531). While disagreeing with the grounds of rejection (as explained in response to the previous Official Action in this case), Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 18 and 25 as suggested by the Examiner in order to put the claims in condition for allowance. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the broader subject matter of the original claims in a continuation of this application. The amended independent claims incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 2, 3, 10 and 11. These dependent claims have now been canceled, along with dependent claims 19, 20, 26, 27, 34 and 35, which recited similar limitations. In view of these amendments, claims 1, 6, 7, 18, 22, 25, 30 and 31 are believed to be patentable over the cited art.


Dependent claims 2-5, 8, 10-17, 19-21, 23, 24, 26-29, 32 and 34-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Browning in view of Bull and Lorie, and further in view of one or more of Matsukawa et al. (U.S. Patent 6,470,336), deCarmo et al. (U.S. Patent 6,181,339), Strub et al. (U.S. Patent 6,563,532), Burch (U.S. Patent 6,295,387), Graves (U.S. Patent 6,454,173), Allen (U.S. Patent 4,256,953), Melville et al.

(U.S. Patent 5,982,555), Radomsky et al. (U.S. Patent 6,600,899) and Graham et al. (U.S. Patent 6,281,879). Claims 2, 3, 10, 11, 19, 20, 26, 27, 34 and 35 have been canceled without prejudice, as noted above. Claims 4, 5, 12, 21, 28, 29 and 36 have been amended for proper dependence following the cancellation of the claims from which they formerly depended. In view of the patentability of amended independent claims 1, 18 and 25, dependent claims 4, 5, 8, 12-17, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29, 32 and 36-42 are also believed to be patentable.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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